

Message Text

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SUBJECT: MEETING OF SLOVAK NATIONAL COUNCIL

BEGIN SUMMARY: A TWO-DAY SESSION OF THE SLOVAK NATIONAL COUNCIL MET MAY 14-15, 1975 TO DISCUSS THE SLOVAK GOVERNMENT POLICIES. THE PREDICTABLE OUTCOME, AN ECHO OF THE KSC LINE SET DOWN IN NOVEMBER, 1974, WAS A SLOVAK GOVERNMENT CALL FOR MORE EFFICIENT ECONOMIC DEVELOP-

MENT, WITH STRESS ON IMPROVED RESULTS IN CAPITAL CONSTRUCTION AND ON INCREASED AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION. END SUMMARY

1. ECONOMIC PROBLEMS: IN THE FIRST DAY OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL SESSION, ATTENDED BY KSC FIRST SECRETARY JOSEF LENART, SLOVAK PREMIER PETER COLOTKA AND OTHER SLOVAK LEADERS, THE EMPHASIS WAS ON SHORT-FALLS IN CAPITAL CONSTRUCTION AND SHORTAGES IN AGRICULTURAL OUTPUT RE-

SULTING FROM POOR WEATHER. ACCORDING TO PUBLISHED STATEMENTS ON THE SESSION, THE COUNCIL DECIDED THAT RESULTS IN SLOVAK INVESTMETN CONSTRUCTION WERENOT FAVORABLE, MAINLY DUE TO SHORTAGES IN SUPPLIERS,

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MACHINES AND EQUIPMENT.

EMPHASIS HAD TO BE PLACED, DECIDED THE COUNCIL, ON IMPROVING SLOVAK FOREIGN TRADE BALANCES, SAVINGS OF FUEL AND ENERGY, RAW MATERIALS, AND ON IMPROVING MANAGEMENT AT ALL LEVELS. EFFICIENCY, THAT THORN IN THE SIDE OF ALL CZECHOSLOVAK INDUSTRY, NEED TO BE VASTLY IMPROVED, NOTED THE PARTICIPANTS.

2. THE SOLUTION? IT WAS MOSTLY THE CUSTOMARY VERBAL EXHORTATION. FURNISHING APPROPRIATE, PREDICTABLE PRAISE FOR "THE FAVORABLE POLITICAL CLIMATE" IN SLOVAKIA, THE SLOVAK NATIONAL COUNCIL DECIDED ON MAY 14 THAT IT WAS NOT NECESSARY TO ADOPT NEW, DIFFERENT MEASURES TO IMPROVE INDUSTRIAL OUTPUT BUT RATHER TO "UNITE THE EFFORTS OF ALL PARTICIPANTS IN INVESTMENT CONSTRUCTION TOWARDS PURPOSEFUL ORGANIZATION AND CARRYING OUT THE PLANNED PROJECTIONS WITH THE PARTY RESPONSIBLE APPROACH." THE MAY 15 SESSION, DEVOTED TO METHODS TO INCREASE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION AND TO THE NEED FOR IMPROVING THE SLOVAK ENVIRONMENT AND FIGHT POLLUTION, RESULTED IN MANY WORDS BUT NO REVISED APPROACHES TO RESOLVE THE SNAGS.

3. A NEW HOLIDAY - ANOTHER SLOVAK STEP FORWARD: ONE NOVEL OUTCOME OF THE TWO-DAY SESSION, HOWEVER, WAS NULLIFICATION OF THE SLOVAK DECREE PROCLAIMING AUGUST 29, THE HOLIDAY MARKING THE SLOVAK NATIONAL UPRISING, AS A SLOVAK HOLIDAY. THIS WAS GOOD NEWS THOUGH, MADE POSSIBLE, THE COUNCIL NOTED WITH PLEASURE, BECAUSE AUGUST 29 HAD BECOME A NATIONAL, I.E., CZECHOSLOVAK, HOLIDAY AND THUS WOULD BE CELEBRATED CSSR-WIDE.

4. COMMENT: IT HAS BEEN AN OPEN SECRET AMONG BOTH CZECHOSLOVAK AND FOREIGN OBSERVERS THAT THE SLOVAK ECONOMY, REFLECTING THE SITUATION COUNTRY-WIDE, IS NOT IN GOOD SHAPE. AS THE CZECHOSLOVAK COMMUNIST PARTY (KSC) DID IN NOVEMBER 1974, THE SLOVAK NATIONAL COUNCIL SEEMS TO BE RELYING ON VERBAL, POLITICAL EXHORTATION MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE AS THE CURE FOR ECONOMIC ILLS. THIS APPEARS STILL TO BE HAPPENING DESPITE AN IMPLICIT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT, IN THE COUNCIL'S ANALYSIS OF JANUARY-APRIL 1975 ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE FIGURES (NOT DISCLOSED BUT DESCRIBED AS INDICATING SERIOUSLY INADEQUATE PERFORMANCE) THAT THE ECONOMIC PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED BY THE NOVEMBER, 1974 KSC CENTRAL COMMITTEE PLENUM REMAIN TO BE SOLVED. THUS, IF THIS SESSION OF THE SLOVAK COUNCIL IS A VALID MEASURE OF THINGS POLITICAL AS WELL AS ECONOMIC, IN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CZECHOSLOVAKIA, AND WE THINK IT IS, IT LOOKS AS IF THE NOVEMBER PLENUM LINE ON "JAWBONING" THE CSSR OUT OF ITS ECONOMIC PRECIPITATIONS IS STILL THE ORDER OF THE DAY.
PERRY

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